

Sinema	Tillis	Warren
Smith	Toomey	Whitehouse
Stabenow	Tuberville	Wyden
Sullivan	Van Hollen	Young
Tester	Warner	
Thune	Warnock	

NAYS—8

Blackburn	Hawley	Shelby
Ernst	Lankford	Wicker
Hagerty	Scott (FL)	

NOT VOTING—1

Graham

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 195.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kenneth Allen Polite, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 195, Kenneth Allen Polite, Jr., of Louisiana, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Tina Smith, Margaret Wood Hassan, Catherine Cortez Masto, Jeff Merkley, Patty Murray, Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow, Gary C. Peters, Angus S. King, Jr., Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Ben Ray Lujan, Jack Reed, Chris Van Hollen.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 246.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jennifer Ann Abruzzo, of New York, to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board for a term of four years.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 246, Jennifer Ann Abruzzo, of New York, to be General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board for a term of four years.

Charles E. Schumer, Ben Ray Lujan, Jeff Merkley, Raphael Warnock, Alex Padilla, Sheldon Whitehouse, Christopher A. Coons, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Patrick J. Leahy, Tammy Baldwin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher Murphy, Tim Kaine, John Hickenlooper, Angus S. King, Jr., Tammy Duckworth, Patty Murray.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls for cloture motions filed today, Thursday, July 15, be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The senior Senator from Texas.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, our Democratic colleagues have begun to lay out the groundwork for a partisan reconciliation bill totaling \$3.5 trillion—what used to be an absolutely astonishing amount of money.

We don't have many details about how that money could be spent, but based on everything we have heard from President Biden and our Democratic colleagues over recent months, there are some safe assumptions: Medicare expansion, Green New Deal-era climate initiatives, and a range of free programs that we know aren't free at all—college, childcare; you name it.

To pay for these runaway spending habits, our Democratic colleagues will lean on job-killing tax increases and excessive borrowing from future generations. As a reminder, this is only one-half of the dual-track strategy they are pushing this month. The other

half is more than \$1 trillion worth of infrastructure.

And I would note that while there is strong bipartisan support for an infrastructure bill, that the Democratic leader is apparently intending to file for cloture on a motion to proceed to a bill that hasn't even been written yet, much less had a Congressional Budget Office score to see whether the pay-fors are meaningful or phony.

As I see it, our friends on the other side have made it even more difficult to convince our colleagues, let alone the American people, that this type of spending is necessary. After all, they have already developed a spotty record this year. At a time when our debts were piling up, they added up even more unnecessary spending.

Back in March, Democrats spent nearly \$2 trillion without the support of a single Republican. They claimed this was all in the name of COVID-19 relief, even though less than 10 percent directly supported our pandemic response. The rest was a grab bag of irresponsible spending.

One case in point is the blue State bailout. Democrats spent \$350 billion more in aid to State and local governments, many of which were not even facing any sort of budget shortfalls. Democrats said the jobs of everybody from police officers to teachers would be in jeopardy without this funding.

Republicans offered that this huge sum of funding wasn't needed since many States were not operating in the red. Even liberal economists and non-partisan groups, like the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, agreed.

But as the old saying goes, time tells all. And it didn't take much time for us to see how completely unnecessary this \$350 billion payout was. Take California as an example. California has more than \$100 billion budget surplus. That is with a capital "B." Governor Newsom is using that money to dole out stimulus checks and provide medical coverage for undocumented immigrants.

New Jersey has had so much extra cash lying around that it has made its first full payment into the State's pension system in more than 25 years. But they didn't stop there. It exceeded that payment by more than half a billion dollars.

This was exactly the kind of reckless spending of supposed COVID-19 dollars borrowed against future generations that we advocated against because we saw a tidal wave of funding going to States that were not even operating in the red.

One recent POLITICO article read:

State Faced Financial Ruin. Now they're swimming in cash.

The Wall Street Journal Editorial Board asked: "Didn't States Say They Were Broke?"

At a time when our spending already mirrored wartime expenses, Democrats handed States piles of cash to erase debts and add to rainy-day funds, not to provide for COVID-19 relief.

This money could have been used to invest in our roads and bridges, to have credible pay-fors for the bipartisan infrastructure bill that is currently being considered, or to increase broadband access in rural communities, or to support the response to the immigrant crisis occurring on our southern border, or a number of other priorities.

But rather than repurposing the surplus funds from the first spending bonanza, our Democratic colleagues are trying to double down on reckless spending, more irresponsible borrowing, more unnecessary spending, and more burdensome taxes. This multitrillion-dollar spending spree comes at a time that is already an unstable one for our economy.

Last month, inflation hit a 13-year high. And average prices are up 5.4 percent over the last year. Now, this is what happens when so much money starts chasing limited goods and services. The price of those goods and services goes up. That is what helps to cause inflation. And consumers are the ones feeling the sting of rising prices for virtually everything they buy.

Fruits and vegetables are up 3.2 percent; electricity is up 3.8 percent; and dining-out costs are up 4.2 percent over a year ago. For families operating on a budget, unlike the Federal Government that can simply print money and borrow more money and impose that burden on future generations—for families operating on a budget, especially those who battled job losses and other tough financial circumstances during the pandemic, those dollars and those expenses add up awfully quick.

And those account for only a few of the price increases that families are facing. For example, if you want to purchase a washer or dryer for your home, you are going to be met with some pretty serious sticker shock. Prices are up 26 percent over last year.

For folks hitting the road for maybe a little time off during the summertime or maybe even just commuting back and forth to work will have to budget quite a bit more for the gasoline necessary to get them there. They are paying 45 percent more at the pump than they did just 1 year ago.

And anyone heading to the used-car lot is bound for a big surprise. Over the last 12 months, used-car prices are up an eye-popping 45.2 percent. We know one contributing factor is the shortage of semiconductors necessary to run these computers on wheels that we now call cars. Without a steady supply of these chips, automakers haven't been able to manufacture the normal number of new vehicles, making used ones a particular hot commodity.

This is another reason why the House needs to take up the bipartisan U.S. Innovation and Competition Act, which passed the Senate last month. It can take literally years to get new semiconductor foundries or manufacturing facilities up and running. And time is of the essence. Getting this bill signed into law will help bolster domestic chip

production and safeguard against similar shortages in the future.

But getting back to these rising costs depicted here on this chart, these kinds of across-the-board cost increases are simply unmanageable for many families. I know it is easy sitting here in Washington, DC, getting a government salary, to think that, well, people can manage. But if you are a working family, particularly one coming off of layoffs or reduced hours as a result of the COVID-19 mitigation efforts, these are real. And they bite into the economics of these families.

As bad as inflation is, it is only one part of our economic woes. We are also seeing trouble getting people to go back to work. In February last year, before the pandemic hit, the unemployment rate was 3.5 percent. The economy was hitting on all cylinders. But within 2 months, unemployment went from 3.5 percent to 15 percent.

Since then, thanks to our investments and bipartisan cooperation and our great scientists, we have made steady progress in getting workers back on the job. But, unfortunately, our Democratic colleagues have seen fit to incentivize men and women to remain on the sidelines of the labor market.

The partisan bill they passed earlier this year extended, bolstered unemployment benefits through the end of September, long after we expected our economy to reopen.

It was literally true with the \$300 Federal supplement to State unemployment benefits. People receiving unemployment benefits in my State, 80 percent of them got more from unemployment than they did from their former jobs.

That is simply the wrong kind of incentives to try to incentivize people not to work. We need to incentivize and facilitate people getting back to work so they can support their families.

So it is no wonder our economy is still struggling to rebound. A partisan go-it-alone strategy has not led to positive results for our country. It has driven up debt, deficits, borrowing, and spending. And for what?

The American people are spending more of their hard-earned money on everyday items. Workers are sitting on the sidelines of the labor markets. And our national debt is at a higher level than it was following World War II.

In the last election—contrary to, perhaps, the belief among some circles here in Washington—the voters did not give our Democratic colleagues a mandate. They didn't sign off on the far-left agenda or give a green light to spend trillions and trillions of dollars on unnecessary liberal programs.

If they wanted BERNIE SANDERS' multitrillion-dollar budget, they would have elected him President of the United States. But we know that did not happen.

Voters elected a 50-50 Senate, lessened the Democratic majority in the

House, and took President Biden at his word that he promised to work across the aisle. This far left—hard left turn is not what the American people voted for.

Republicans will continue to fight this irresponsible spending bonanza once again. And I hope, I hope some of our Democratic colleagues will stand with us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I see a very different country, apparently, from my colleague. And I respect Senator CORNYN.

I sat at this desk on March 6. We had been voting, as the Presiding Officer from Hawaii remembers. We had been voting all night. It was a Saturday at about 12:30. We had voted for about 11 hours. And we defeated by one vote an amendment where Senator GRASSLEY and my colleagues from the Finance Committee and the Senate Republicans tried to delete the child tax credit from the American Rescue Plan. We then took a second vote around noon on Saturday, after 11 or 12 hours of voting, where we passed the American Rescue Plan by one vote.

Two different times, the Republican Party, which always votes for tax cuts for the richest people in the country, always on party-line votes, always under the very discredited theory that with tax cuts the dollars trickle down to workers and to the middle class and the rest of the country—they will always vote for a big tax cut for rich people, but they opposed twice—unanimously opposed, every single one opposed—the child tax credit.

(Mr. KING assumed the Chair.)

Today is the magic day. I remember saying to Senator CASEY, when we passed the American Rescue Plan, that this is the best day of my career in public service because we are going to reduce the child poverty rate by 50 percent.

This isn't a tax cut for rich people, so they can buy another home or another yacht or another vacation place. This is money in the pockets of working-class and middle-class and struggling people from Maine and Ohio and Texas and Iowa and all over the country.

So, today, people should start checking their bank accounts, looking at their phones, checking their bank accounts, looking in their mailbox. Starting today—today, Friday, Saturday, Monday—the great majority of American families will see this tax cut. They will see this \$250 or \$300 a month. They are going to start receiving it. There will be \$250 if the child is 6 or over. There will be \$250 6 to 17. If they are 5 or under, it will be \$300 per month per child—on July 15, August 15, September 15, October, November, December.

Then, with the second half of the tax cut, they will get a lump sum starting next year when they file their taxes. Ninety-two percent of kids in my

State—92 percent of children under 18—are eligible for this.

These are all numbers and these are all statistics, but here is what it means. I did a series of roundtables in Cleveland and Columbus and Dayton and Cincinnati and Toledo and Youngstown and Fremont and Bryan and Defiance, OH. Here is what I heard. One woman said: You know, my son, for the first time in his life, I can send him for a week at summer camp because of this child tax credit.

A father said: I can buy the equipment for my daughter to play fastpitch softball now.

Another said: I am so anxious—I heard this many times—I am so anxious at the end of every month during the last week. How am I going to cobble together the money to pay my rent? And often I have to choose between buying enough food and paying my rent.

Others said: Now I can work more hours because I can afford daycare for my children.

A few said things like: You know, now, per child—my babies are 3 and 4 years old—I can put \$100 a month aside for each of them so they can go to Loraine Community College or Sinclair or Northwest State Community College or Ohio State University or Denison. They can get a start on saving money. Why wouldn't we want to do that?

We talk about infrastructure around here. Infrastructure is building a foundation so families can launch their children to a better life. And providing families \$250 or \$300 a month—month after month after month—gives those families, give those kids an opportunity they never would have had. Why wouldn't we think this is the best day this Congress has had in 25 years when we do that? It is pretty simple.

You know what I really like about this—and I know the Presiding Officer appreciates that in Maine; Senator KING in Maine, Senator GRASSLEY in Iowa—we don't make the decisions about what these parents should do. We provide them the dollars. They spend it best, whether it is a family in Dubuque or a family in Portland or whether it is a family in Mansfield or Cleveland. I don't know what is best for them. We provide them the dollars. They make the decision of what is best for their child—summer camp, diapers, softball games, saving for college, just having enough to eat, occasionally getting to go out to a diner down the street in Lima, OH. All those kinds of decisions, let the parents make.

We are giving them that. If we care about family values, if we care about our families, give them a little more help. It will make a huge difference in their lives.

That is why it is so important. It starts today, then next month, and the month after, for a year.

We need to renew this. We need to make sure it is permanent. If we do that, it is going to launch a whole generation of kids and give them more op-

portunity. What is not to love about that?

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, why is there such an increase in violent crimes in American cities?

In New York City, the murder rate is up 37 percent from 2 years ago; in Atlanta, 53 percent from 2019. In Portland, OR, murders have increased over 500 percent.

So everybody is asking: What is going on?

Well, if you were to ask President Biden, he would say the usual rhetoric about how we need more gun control. The White House recently put out a so-called strategy to reduce crimes.

What is the first thing that the President wants to do about this issue? Go after rogue gun dealers. Well, we all know gun dealers must follow the law, like doing background checks. We all agree on that. But I don't think anyone truly believes that legal gun dealers are responsible for the sudden spike in violent crime, including our own Department of Justice.

Referring to a Department of Justice 2019 report, inmates who committed a gun crime most likely got their weapons from the black market—no background checks there. In fact, according to this report, only about 1 in 50 Federal inmates got a gun from a legal firearms dealer.

Speaking of which, if Democrats really want to protect Americans from illegal gun sales, they should support my bill, the Protecting Communities and Preserving the Second Amendment Act, which would actually do that.

But getting back to the recent crime wave, the real problem is what everyone knows but many of my friends on the left dare not say. The real problem is that for the past 14 months, police officers across the country have been vilified for doing their job, which has led to many of those same police leaving their job. In addition, liberal communities—and everybody knows most of our big cities of America are run by Democratic mayors—reduced the police forces and even reduced prosecutions. The result is that in San Francisco, for example, as you see on television, shoplifting appears to be a way of life.

Some police have pulled back from making sure that we are all safe because in too many cities, elected officials don't have their backs.

Last year, Attorney General Barr enacted Operation Legend, which paired Federal law enforcement officers up with local police in nine cities where crimes were soaring. This led to the arrest of 6,000 violent criminals by the end of last year, including hundreds of murderers.

Now, does this White House have the will to support law enforcement so the police can make our streets safer? Does the President have their backs?

Recently, the President's spokesperson said it was the Republicans who wanted to defund the police, not the Democrats. And that is just plain untrue and everybody knows it. What they were trying to say is that Republicans didn't support the Democrats' irresponsible spending bill back in March.

That is not defunding the police. That is just being fiscally responsible. It is not Republicans who say things like: "No more policing, incarceration, or militarization. It can't be reformed," or words like "defunding the police means defunding the police."

Let me give you another example. The push to take resources away from law enforcement is alive and well over in the House. A couple of weeks ago, the Senate passed three bills that would support police. The first one is the Protecting America's First Responders Act. That bill makes sure seriously injured first responders or their widows and children get the benefits that they are entitled to.

The second bill, the COPS Counseling Act, creates a zone of privacy for police officers so that they can have counseling sessions for traumatic experiences and protect their privacy.

A third bill, the Jaime Zapata and Victor Avila Federal Officers Protection Act, makes it clear that killing a law enforcement officer overseas is a crime in the United States.

The Senate passed these bills because when it comes to law enforcement, we have their backs.

But right now, Democratic leadership in the House is preventing a vote on these bills. Why? I don't know. They are bipartisan bills that should easily pass with resounding support. If you are with me on funding the police, I know you will support these bills. If the President wants to reduce crime, he should tell our police: Go out there. Patrol our streets. We have your back.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. TUBERVILLE. Mr. President, Members of the Senate were all home last week for 2 weeks during their State work period. It was a good time to get back—to get back to reality, as I call it, because we all know here in Washington, people aren't always operating in reality. If we were, we wouldn't be seeing some of the policies that are coming out as we speak.

These State work periods are a great time to hear directly from the people we represent, and that is who we work for—what they care about and how they are affected by what is happening here in our Nation's Capital.

This is what folks back in Alabama were talking about. They were talking about small businesses that can't find people to work because the government is paying more in unemployment benefits than folks make on the job. And that is understandable. We have to understand that, and we have to understand the problem and how we rectify